

SUPPORT FOR THE AMENDMENTS

Claims 2-3 were previously canceled.

Claims 1-15 have been amended.

Claims 21-34 have been added.

The amendment of Claims 1-15 to improve clarity and readability is supported by the

- corresponding claims as originally filed. New Claims 21-34 are supported by the originally
- presented claims, in particular Claims 12 and 13.

No new matter has been added.

REMARKS

Claims 1 and 4-34 are pending in the present application.

At the outset, Applicants wish to thank Examiner Patel for the indication that Claims 1, 4-11, and 14-20 are allowed (January 28, 2004 Office Action, page 3, numbered paragraph

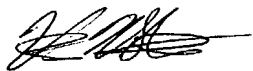
5). In addition, Applicants wish to thank Examiner Patel for the indication that Claims 12 and 13 are free of the art of record.

The objection to Claims 12 and 13 is obviated by the amendments hereinabove. Claims 12 and 13 have been amended to be free of the Examiner's criticisms. Accordingly, Applicants request acknowledgement that this ground of objection has been withdrawn.

Applicants submit that the present application is now in condition for allowance. Early notification of such action is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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